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Security Council

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Report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia, 6–8 September 2017

I. Introduction

1. In a letter dated 27 July 2017, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the Council had decided to send a mission to Ethiopia. The composition of the mission and its terms of reference were communicated to the Secretary-General on 1 September 2017 in a letter from the President (S/2017/757) and are set out in annexes I and II to the present report. The mission was led by the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations.

II. Background

2. The Council carried out its mission to Ethiopia for the eleventh annual joint consultative meeting between the members of the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa on 7 and 8 September 2017. This mission was the first stand-alone visit by the Security Council to the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa.

3. The general objective of the annual joint consultative meeting between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the United Nations Security Council is to strengthen partnership and enhance cooperation between the two Councils through an exchange of views on issues of interest to both bodies in the areas of maintenance of international peace and security, especially in Africa.

4. The specific objective of the eleventh annual joint consultative meeting was for the two Councils to exchange views on the situation in Somalia, the situation in South Sudan and the situation in the Lake Chad Basin.

5. Preceding the eleventh annual joint consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and of the Peace and Security Council held an informal joint meeting to discuss the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations, funding for African Union peace and security activities, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

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III. Eleventh annual joint consultative meeting of the members of the Security Council and of the Peace and Security Council

6. The members of the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union held their eleventh annual joint consultative meeting at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa on 8 September. The meeting was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of September 2017, and the Permanent Representative of Botswana to the African Union and President of the African Union Peace and Security Council for the month of September. The meeting was also attended by the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union.

7. The co-chairs of the meeting made parallel calls for joint field missions and harmonization of the programmes of work of the two Councils, expressing hope that the consultations would add more value to their work.

8. The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union highlighted the importance of the signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, as a recognition that neither organization can work without the other to address the current complex peace and security challenges facing the continent of Africa.

Situation in Somalia

9. While members of both Councils acknowledged the gains made by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in the Al-Shabaab counteroffensive and commended AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries, the discussion on a possible AMISOM drawdown emphasized the importance that it be systematic and based on conditions so as to avoid a reversal of the gains achieved so far, and that it should reflect the need for Somali military and police forces to assume greater responsibility for security.

10. Members of the Security Council commended the significant progress made in Somalia, including the recently held elections and the peaceful transfer of power. They paid tribute to AMISOM and to the troop- and police-contributing countries for the efforts and sacrifices made. In the light of the continued attacks by Al-Shabaab, they expressed the commitment of the Security Council to continue supporting the operations and stressed the need to improve the operational readiness of the troops. In that regard, Security Council members called for predictable, flexible and sustainable funding for AMISOM, accompanied by efficient, effective, accountable and transparent counteroffensive operations, as well as effective oversight, command and control and joint planning. Several members highlighted the need to ensure priority is given to the gender dimension in peacebuilding measures.

11. The Peace and Security Council commended the efforts of the Somali forces and AMISOM, as well as the strong international support. Despite the convergence of views and the progress made, the Peace and Security Council underlined the need for enablers, multipliers and related logistical support for AMISOM. The Peace and Security Council recalled its visit to Somalia in March 2017 and the recommendations of the Military Operations Coordination Committee meeting in July calling for an exit strategy. A gradual drawdown would still require appropriate resources, as would the strengthening of the capacities of the Somali national security forces and improved governance architecture. The Peace and Security Council stressed that implementation of the Somali national development plan was a prerequisite for lasting peace and security.

Situation in South Sudan

12. Members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council emphasized the importance of close collaboration between the African Union, the United Nations and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). They also highlighted the need for unconditional, inclusive and genuine political dialogue and for full support to the IGAD-led revitalization process towards full implementation of the 2015 peace agreement.

13. Members of the Security Council expressed regret over the slow implementation of the peace agreement and the growing apprehension in South Sudan. They noted that the cautious optimism expressed in April 2016 had evaporated as a result of the violence that had erupted, the increased insecurity and the worsening humanitarian crisis. Some stressed that it would be premature to hold elections in 2018 as envisaged. Members commended the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission for championing the one-voice initiative under the former President of Botswana, Festus Mogae, and called on IGAD, the African Union and the United Nations to unify their efforts to follow a common path. They also called for the full deployment of the regional protection force and noted that there was no military solution to the crisis and that genuine dialogue could not take place while fighting was ongoing. Members of the Security Council reiterated that policy measures should include ceasefire pronouncements that went beyond narratives, coordination of peace efforts to avoid duplication, and actual establishment of the hybrid court.

14. The Peace and Security Council noted with satisfaction the similar language used by both Councils on the situation in South Sudan. It highlighted the critical importance of the full deployment of the regional protection force, which should be operational without delay. The Peace and Security Council called for regular meetings of IGAD, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the Chiefs of Defence Staff of troop-contributing countries to support the implementation of the peace process.

Situation in the Lake Chad Basin

15. Based on their respective visits to the region, members of both Councils noted that while the Multinational Joint Task Force and other associated operations had weakened Boko Haram, the situation remained fertile for violent extremists to recruit and regroup, unless the political, socioeconomic and environmental root causes were addressed.

16. Members of the Security Council referred to their mission to the Lake Chad Basin region in March 2017, which had afforded them a better understanding of the scale of the crisis, given that the immediate Boko Haram attacks tended to overshadow the broader issues. They paid tribute to the impressive coordination of efforts, especially on joint operations against Boko Haram activities. They outlined the complexity of the dynamics at play in the overall situation, including social, religious, economic and environmental factors. Underlining the efforts of countries of the region to tackle the crisis, members of the Security Council called for support to be provided to them, complementing reactive humanitarian and military measures with efforts towards long-term sustainable development. Some members underscored a clear link between climate change and the crisis in the area, within the context of the population's vulnerability. They emphasized that this was an example of a crisis that required a comprehensive approach to deal with the root causes, including environmental, economic, social and ideological factors.

17. The Peace and Security Council recalled its visit to the region in July 2017. It had devoted multiple sessions to the security and humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin, but also to the broader issues at play, such as the drought, climate change

and poverty levels. While the action of the Multinational Joint Task Force had weakened Boko Haram and disrupted its supply lines, members of the Peace and Security Council noted that Boko Haram continued to carry out attacks. They expressed appreciation for the support provided, but stressed the need for continuing efforts to assist the Joint Task Force in terms of logistics and specialized requirements. The Peace and Security Council called for support from the Security Council to the planned conference of the Lake Chad Basin Commission on the development of a regional stabilization strategy, including with a view to promoting the resilience of local communities.

IV. Informal joint meeting of the members of the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council

18. In advance of the eleventh joint consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council held their second informal seminar on 7 September 2017. The meeting was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of September 2017, and the Permanent Representative of Botswana to the African Union and President of the African Union Peace and Security Council for the month of September.

19. The topics of the United Nations-African Union partnership, financing for African Union peace support operations, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development were specifically discussed. Acknowledging the need to face the peace and security challenges in Africa together, members of both Councils stressed the importance of strengthening working methods and cooperation between the two organizations.

Partnership between the African Union and the United Nations

20. Members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council underscored the importance of the strategic partnership and the need to further strengthen it. Members of both Councils called for the development of working modalities for joint activities, the conduct of joint missions to conflict areas, which would assist in the formulation of common positions and recommendations, and the further integration of African perspectives into the Security Council deliberations through, for example, more frequent briefings from African Union envoys.

21. The Peace and Security Council noted the positive evolution in the United Nations-African Union relationship over recent years and the subsequent mutual benefits allowing each organization to be more able to promote peace and find solutions to conflict. The commitment by the new leadership of both organizations to a reinforced partnership as a priority was underscored. The Peace and Security Council also raised some of the remaining challenges, pointing at the need for joint working procedures and modalities. The conduct of joint field missions by the Councils to conflict or post-conflict areas was suggested as one modality that would help build common understanding of, and therefore common solutions to, peace and security issues.

22. Members of the Security Council underlined the significant emphasis it put on the consultations with the Peace and Security Council and the great importance given to the partnership. Appreciation was expressed for the role of the African Union and the regional economic communities in addressing challenges on the continent, including on socioeconomic development. Members of the Security Council also

stressed the need for greater coordination between the Councils, including the development of new arrangements and more joint messaging. Strengthening the capacity of African Union peace support operations, integrating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, and ensuring concrete implementation of the joint framework, were all mentioned as key endeavours for the United Nations in the current context. Acknowledging the comparative advantages of both organizations, some members of the Security Council called for an improved allocation of resources.

Financing for African Union peace and security activities

23. The importance of the key role played by African Union peace support operations was recognized, but there were different views on the modalities for a sustainable and predictable financing system.

24. Recalling Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations which provides for a role for regional organizations, the Peace and Security Council strongly advocated in favour of predictable funding for African Union peace operations, including through United Nations assessed contributions. The principle of universality was called for, with collective security implying that crises in Africa were not solely the responsibility of African States. Examples such as AMISOM had shown that ad hoc financing arrangements were not reliable and could impede the success of such peace operations. Recalling the commitment by African Union member States to cover 25 per cent of the costs of its peace operations, the Peace and Security Council called for concrete political steps from the United Nations to cement the provision of predictable financing, noting that the issue remained one of the most important strategic challenges facing both organizations.

25. Members of the Security Council recalled their acknowledgement through resolution 2320 (2016) of the need to address the issue of financing African Union peace and security activities. They referred to the report of the Secretary-General in which possible funding modalities for African Union-led peace support operations were put forward (S/2017/454) and mentioned points of agreement that had emerged in the ensuing discussions: the international community must help Africa in matters of peace and security; African Union-led peace support operations were essential tools; and the latter must be based on predictable funding. Some members of the Security Council agreed with the Peace and Security Council's call, while some others argued that recourse to United Nations assessed contributions would require the establishment of an appropriate framework, including benchmarks for financial transparency, conduct and discipline and human rights to be demonstrably implemented across African Union field operations.

Post-conflict reconstruction and development and peacebuilding

26. There was general agreement between the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council on the need to integrate all activities related to peacebuilding. There was also recognition that the root causes of conflict must be addressed, beyond solely military solutions. The need for enhanced coordination between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peace and Security Council was also underlined.

27. Members of the Security Council welcomed the African Union approach on preventive diplomacy and mediation and emphasized that peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities were of key importance, noting that military responses were never sufficient to resolve crisis situations. Work on development and the root causes of conflict must receive the same level of attention as the restoration of security. Members of the Security Council underlined the importance of the partnership with the African Union in that regard, aimed at enhancing its work on early warning, joint

analysis and joint messaging. Stressing the need for national ownership of peacebuilding, members of the Security Council advocated for coordination on peacebuilding across the range of stakeholders, including bilateral, international, local and private sector actors, as well as international financial institutions.

28. The Peace and Security Council stated that the African Union Commission and the regional economic commissions had been proactive in implementing the African Union's post-conflict reconstruction and development policy. It noted the provision of post-crisis support through the African Union liaison offices. The Peace and Security Council called for a common approach to peacebuilding, increased interaction between the two Councils on peacebuilding, enhanced support from the Peacebuilding Commission for the post-conflict policy and strengthened coordination between United Nations missions and African Union liaison offices.

V. Additional meetings

Meeting with United Nations officials

29. On 6 September, Security Council members held a meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, Haile Menkerios; the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, David Shearer; and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, Michael Keating. Participants exchanged views on country-specific situations, the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union and issues related to peace and security, especially in Africa.

Meeting with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia

30. On 7 September, the members of the Security Council held a meeting with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Dessalegn, to exchange views on the Ethiopian perspectives regarding the situation in the region. The meeting was also attended by the Prime Minister's Special Envoy, Berhane Gebre-Christos.

31. During the discussion, concern was raised with regard to the situation in several countries neighbouring Ethiopia. On Somalia, the significant progress achieved on the political and security fronts was mentioned, as well as the remaining substantial challenges, including adequate support to AMISOM. The search for peace in South Sudan was also discussed, with the IGAD high-level revitalization forum highlighted as the only current avenue towards a political solution. Assistance by the international community to the people of Eritrea was called for by some delegations. Lastly, the meeting discussed the impact of the Gulf crisis on the Horn of Africa and prospects for a successful peace mediation.

Meeting with the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security and Commissioner for Political Affairs

32. On 7 September, the members of the Security Council held a meeting with the Commissioner for Peace and Security and Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union. The meeting was also attended by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the African Union. They discussed issues relating to the United Nations-African Union partnership in peace and security and modalities to best operationalize it. The Commissioners provided an update regarding the African Union's ongoing institutional reform.

Annex I

Composition of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia

Ambassador Sacha Sergio Llorentty Soliz (Bolivia (Plurinational State of))

Ambassador Liu Jieyi (China)

Ambassador Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt)

Ambassador Tekeda Alemu (Ethiopia)

Ms. Anne Gueguen (France)

Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi (Italy)

Ambassador Yasuhisa Kawamura (Japan)

Ambassador Kairat Umarov (Kazakhstan)

Mr. Petr V. Iliichev (Russian Federation)

Ambassador Fodé Seck (Senegal)

Ambassador Olof Skoog (Sweden)

Mr. Yuriy Vitrenko (Ukraine)

Ambassador Jonathan Allen (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Ambassador Michele J. Sison (United States of America)

Ambassador Elbio Rosselli (Uruguay)

Annex II

Terms of reference for the Security Council mission to Ethiopia

1. The Security Council will carry out its mission to Ethiopia for the eleventh joint annual consultative meeting between the members of the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa on 7 and 8 September 2017.

Informal consultations

Partnership between the African Union and the United Nations

2. To continue to develop an effective partnership and enhance cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations through an exchange of views on issues of interest to both the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Funding for African Union peace and security activities

3. To discuss how the United Nations can enhance support to the African Union peace operations authorized by the Security Council, particularly with regard to the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing these operations and to discuss progress made by the African Union towards implementation of benchmarks for self-financing, financial transparency, conduct and discipline and human rights frameworks.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

4. To discuss the importance of partnership and cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, to improve cooperation and coordination in peacebuilding, to increase synergies and ensure the coherence and complementarity of such efforts, and to encourage regular exchanges, joint initiatives and information-sharing between the Peacebuilding Support Office and relevant bodies of regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union Commission.

Joint consultative meeting

Situation in Somalia

5. To exchange views on how to build on recent political and security achievements to realize the objective of a secure, stable, and prosperous Somalia, in particular through support for security sector reform and institution-building.

Situation in South Sudan

6. To discuss the security and humanitarian situation in South Sudan and what steps the African Union and United Nations Security Council can take to help achieve a genuine and sustainable ceasefire and facilitate the revitalization of the political process towards a lasting solution through inclusive dialogue.

Situation in the Lake Chad Basin

7. To discuss the threat posed by terrorism particularly the terrorist attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), as well as the dire humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin, including large-scale displacement and the risk of famine in the region.

8. To discuss the mobilization and implementation of regional and international support to assist the conflict-affected populations of the region and its respective Governments in their efforts to respond to these challenges.